

## Message Text

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PAGE 01 HELSIN 01333 281101Z

ACTION OIC-02

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 L-03 IO-13 AF-10 ARA-10  
EA-07 NEA-10 CIAE-00 COME-00 DODE-00 DOTE-00  
EB-07 FMC-01 INR-07 NSAE-00 CG-00 DLOS-09 OES-07  
AGRE-00 GSA-02 SIL-01 LAB-04 CEA-01 CAB-02 AID-05  
/114 W

-----109215 281111Z /13

R 281004Z JUN 77

FM AMEMBASSY HELSINKI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1567

INFO AMEMBASSY LONDON

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DEPT PASS COAST GUARD AND DOT

EO 11652: N/A

TAGS: AORG, IMCO, EWWT, FI

SUBJECT: ADMINISTRATIVE INITIATIVE ON MARINE OIL POLLUTION: DELE-  
GATION VISITS TO CAPITALS

1. BEGIN SUMMARY: US DELEGATION HELD FORMAL AND INFORMAL  
DISCUSSIONS WITH FINNISH NATIONAL BOARD OF NAVIGATION, SHIP-  
BUILDERS, SHIPOWNERS AND MINISTRY OFFICIALS JUNE 26 AND 27.  
FINNISH SIDE WAS RECEPTIVE AND VISIT PERMITTED THE US  
DELEGATION TO REITERATE MAIN ELEMENTS OF US INITIATIVES AND  
MOTIVATIONS. FINNS APPRECIATED THE VISIT AND SPARED NO  
EFFORT IN TRYING TO BE HOSPITABLE, BUT SEEM TO HAVE SOME  
RESERVATIONS ABOUT THE US INITIATIVES, PARTICULARLY CONSTRUCTION  
STANDARDS. END SUMMARY.

2. US DELEGATION ARRIVED IN HELSINKI, FROM LONDON, JUNE 25  
IN THE MIDDLE OF A THREE-DAY MIDSUMMER FESTIVAL, WITH  
ALMOST EVERYBODY AWAY FROM HELSINKI. DELEGATION WAS HOSTED AND  
BRIEFED BY EMBASSY ECON COUNSELOR LORIMER AND LABOR OFFICER  
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PAGE 02 HELSIN 01333 281101Z

THOMPSON.

3. ON SUNDAY, JUNE 26, DELEGATION WAS TAKEN FOR A  
BOAT RIDE AND INFORMAL DISCUSSION BY JORAN DAMSTROM,  
PUBLIC RELATIONS CHIEF OF OY WARTSILA AB, SHIPBUILDERS,  
AND TO DINNER BY AMBASSADOR ENSIO HELANIEMI AND TERO  
LEHTOVAARA OF THE LEGAL DIVISION OF THE MINISTRY OF

FOREIGN AFFAIRS. EVENING WAS ENTIRELY PROTOCOLARY.

4. FORMAL DISCUSSIONS WERE ARRANGED AT THE NATIONAL BOARD OF NAVIGATION OFFICES ON MONDAY MORNING, JUNE 27. ABOUT TWENTY FINNS INCLUDING DIRECTOR GENERAL OF THE NATIONAL BOARD, SHIPBUILDERS, SHIPOWNERS AND MARITIME OFFICIALS HEARD PRESENTATION OF THE US INITIATIVES FROM RADM WALLACE FOLLOWED BY QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS. THE QUESTIONS REFLECTED SERIOUS CONCERN ABOUT US BOARDING PROGRAM AND CLASSIC ARGUMENTS AGAINST SEGREGATED BALLAST IN EXISTING TANKERS. (FINNS HAVE SHALLOW PORTS AND NARROW WATERWAYS BUT APPARENTLY DO NOT HAVE THE PROBLEM OF SUBSTANDARD TANKERS OF ANY FLAG.) THE USUAL QUESTIONS ABOUT "WHY SBT," AND "WHAT HAPPENS IF IMCO FAILS TO PRODUCE AN ACCEPTABLE RESULT BY FEBRUARY," WERE ASKED, AND CONCERN WAS EXPRESSED THAT SMALL HIGH QUALITY OPERATOR COULD SUFFER UNDULY WERE US INITIATIVES ADOPTED. FINNISH STATE OIL COMPANY REPRESENTATIVES INDICATED THAT TANKERS EQUIPPED WITH DOUBLE BOTTOMS AS WELL AS OTHER FEATURES FOR ICE CONDITIONS WERE IN USE; HOWEVER, OPERATING COSTS OF SUCH VESSELS WERE 40 PERCENT HIGHER THAN FOR REGULAR EQUIPPED TANKERS. MANY IN MEETING EXPRESSED SURPRISE AT DESCRIPTION OF TYPE OF DISCREPANCIES FOUND BY COAST GUARD IN ITS TANKER BOARDING PROGRAM AND INDICATED LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PAGE 03 HELSIN 01333 281101Z

SUCH CONDITIONS WOULD NOT, REPEAT, WOULD NOT BE FOUND ON FINNISH FLAG TANKERS.

5. DISCUSSIONS WERE MOVED TO AN ICEBREAKER FOR LUNCH AND WERE FOLLOWED BY A MEETING WITH MINISTER OF TRADE AND INDUSTRY EERO RANTALA. MINISTER TANTALA ASKED A FEW POLITE QUESTIONS ABOUT THE US INITIATIVES, THEN TURNED TO THE FINNS' FAVORITE SUBJECT: THE POSSIBILITY OF SALES OF FINNISH ICEBREAKERS TO THE US COAST GUARD.

5. COMMENT: WHILE THE VISIT WAS NO DOUBT WORTHWHILE IN CONSOLIDATING EXCELLENT WORKING RELATIONSHIPS AMONG NORDIC COUNTRIES IN IMCO, THE FINNS SEEMED RETICENT ABOUT EXPRESSING EITHER SUPPORT OR CONCRETE OPPOSITION TO US APPROACH. THEY ARE NOT OPERATORS OF OLD TANKERS INTO US PORTS, AND THEIR TANKER SAFETY AND CREW STANDARDS COMPARE FAVORABLY WITH BEST STANDARDS PRESENTLY IN FORCE. WHILE THEY CANNOT BE EXPECTED TO TAKE THE LEAD IN SUPPORTING US PROPOSALS, THEY WILL ALSO NOT PROVE TO BE A PROBLEM IN IMCO. EXPECTATION IS THAT THEY WILL SPEAK

GENERALLY IN FAVOR OF US INITIATIVES AND LEND SPECIFIC  
SUPPORT EXCEPT WHERE LIMITED BY SHIP OPERATORS'  
CONCERNS ABOUT ECONOMIC IMPLICATIONS.

7. US DELEGATION SENDS.  
HOUSTON

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NNN

## Message Attributes

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**Review Markings:**  
Margaret P. Grafeld  
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22 May 2009  
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